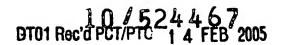
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PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT



In the Claims

Listing of the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application.

- 1. (Currently Amended) A method, suitable for stand off analysis of a sample (2)-comprising one or more chemical and/or biological warfare agents of low volatility, said method comprising:
 - (i) using an excitation means (6)-to vaporise the sample thereby producing a vapour plume (10)-of molecular species; and
 - (ii) using an analytical means (12, 18) to analyse the molecular species within the vapour plume (10) wherein the analytical means analyses the molecular emission spectra of the vapour plume and is provided with means (14) to enable it to receive said spectra for stand off analysis.
- 2. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 1 wherein the excitation means (6) is a laser.
- 3. (Original) A method according to Claim 2 wherein the laser is operated at a fixed wavelength.
- 4. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 2 or Claim 3 wherein the laser has a power of greater than 2 W, preferably greater than 5 W, and more preferably greater than 10 W.
- 5. (Currently Amended) A method according to any of Claims Claim 2 to 4-wherein the laser has a power of less than 150 W, preferably less than 50 W, more preferably less than 20 W.

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6. (Currently Amended) A method according to any of Claims Claim 2 to 5-wherein the laser is operated as continuous laser beam.

- 7. (Currently Amended) A method according to any of Claims Claim 2 to 6-wherein the laser is a carbon dioxide laser.
- 8. (Currently Amended) A method according to any of Claims Claim 1 to 7-wherein the method comprises the use of only a single excitation means (6).
- 9. (Currently Amended) A method according to any of Claims Claim 1 to 8-wherein the vapour plume (10)-is hotter than the surrounding atmosphere by at least 0.1K.
- 10. (Original) A method according to Claim 9 wherein the vapour plume is hotter than the surrounding atmosphere by 1K.
- 11. (Original) A method according to Claim 10 wherein the vapour plume is hotter than the surrounding atmosphere by 5K.
- 12. (Currently Amended) A method according to any of Claims Claim 9 to 11-wherein the analytical means (12, 18) is an infrared spectrometer, preferably a Fourier transform infrared spectrometer.
- 13. (Currently Amended) A kit suitable for stand off analysis of a sample comprising one or more chemical and/or biological warfare agents of low volatility, said kit comprising:
 - (i) an excitation means (6) arranged such that it can be used to vaporise the sample thereby producing a vapour plume (10) of molecular species;
 - (ii) an analytical means (12, 18) arranged to analyse the emission spectra of the molecular species within the vapor plume; and

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- (iii) means (14)-associated with the analytical means (12, 18) to enable said analytical means to receive the emission spectra from the vapour plume.
- 14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus suitable for stand off analysis of a sample comprising one or more chemical and/or biological warfare agents of low volatility, said apparatus comprising:
 - (i) an excitation means (6)-arranged such that it can be used to vaporise the sample thereby producing a vapour plume (10)-of molecular species;
 - (ii) an analytical means (12, 18) arranged to analyse the emission spectra of the molecular species within the vapour plume; and
 - (iii) means (14) associated with the analytical means (12, 18) to enable said analytical means to receive the emission spectra from the vapour plume.